

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

JUNE 7, 1860.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. BRAGG made the following

REPORT.

[To accompany bill S. 347.]

The Committee on Public Lands, to whom was referred a bill to declare the meaning of the act entitled "An act making further provision for the satisfaction of Virginia land warrants," passed August 31, 1852, have had the same under consideration, and report:

That the purpose of the bill referred to the committee was to have the said act of August 31, 1852, so construed as to cause scrip to be issued by the General Land Office to holders of Virginia land warrants, allowances for which had been made by the proper authorities of Virginia prior to the 1st March, 1852, but upon which allowances warrants did not in whole or in part issue to the claimants until after that time.

The laws of Virginia provided that "allowances" for bounty lands should be made by the governor and council of that State, and that upon such *allowances* the register of the land office of that State should issue warrants to the parties entitled; and by the last law on the subject enacted by the legislature of that State, it was provided that no such allowances should be made after the 1st March, 1852.

By the act of Congress, August 31, 1852, (10 Statutes at Large, p. 143,) it was provided "that all unsatisfied outstanding military land warrants, or parts of warrants, issued or allowed prior to the 1st day of March, 1852, by the proper authorities of the Commonwealth of Virginia," &c., may be surrendered to the Secretary of the Interior, who was required to issue scrip for the whole or any portion thereof yet unsatisfied, at the rate of \$1 25 per acre named in the warrant, and which scrip should be receivable in payment of any lands of the United States subject to private entry. This act was construed at the department to apply to cases only in which the allowances had been made and the warrants also taken out, prior to 1st March, 1852.

Many claimants had failed to take out their warrants, in whole or

in part, prior to that time, though the claims had been allowed; and, under this construction, scrip was denied them.

The committee are of opinion that this was an erroneous construction of the act, and that the time named in the act had reference to the *allowance*, and not to the issuing of the warrant. Regarding the bill as somewhat imperfect in its provisions, they report a substitute herewith, striking out all except the enacting clause of the bill, and inserting the substitute, and recommend the passage of the bill, as amended.